

ENGAGING THE NEXT GENERATION

STRATEGY PROPOSAL
FOR THE EUROPEAN
GREEN CAPITAL NETWORK



COPENHAGEN
2014

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Strategy Proposal for the European Green Capital Network

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Photographs by Sandra O. Andersen (SplitArt)

*1st edition, 1st printing
Number printed: 130*



A special thanks to:

The volunteering Climate Ambassadors of CONCITO Dianna Isabella Guyard, Emma Slebsager, Eva Theil, Lea Backes, Marie Forby, Martha Nørgaard, Mitzie Alexandra Saunders and Thor Undebjerg for designing and facilitating the working sessions making this Strategy Proposal possible.

Project manager Amalie Fudim Villesen (City of Copenhagen), project coordinators Ane Rottbøll Jørgensen (City of Copenhagen), Linnea Uppsäll (City of Malmö), Märta Bergkvist (City of Malmö), Helene Ceplitis (City of Malmö), Eric Roupe (City of Malmö), project assistants Iman Mehdi (City of Copenhagen) and Janie Ravnholt Knudsen (City of Copenhagen) and project partners Gill Kelly (Bristol 2015), Regin Pindstrup (Uccle, Brussels) and Synnøve Kjærland (CONCITO, Denmark) for designing, planning and executing the Children's Climate Summit.

The Sharing Copenhagen team for the invitation to present and share our ideas on how to engage and involve children and youths in sustainable development at the Green Capital Days.

The Children's Climate Summit is funded by:

Öresundsklassrummet

Sharing Copenhagen

With partner contributions from:

CONCITO

Bristol 2015

The European School Brussels I.



SHARING
COPENHAGEN 2014



CONCITO

BRISTOL
EUROPEAN
2015 GREEN CAPITAL



ADULTS, LISTEN UP!

THE 5 STRATEGIES FOR ENGAGING THE NEXT GENERATION IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

At the Children's Climate Summit, participants aged 11-16 from Malmö, Bristol, Brussels and Copenhagen, gather to tell city mayors and other decision makers their thoughts on youth involvement in future European Green Capitals. They are Climate Ambassadors, trained to become active citizens, taking part in creating a sustainable future.

The Children's Climate Summit is held within the Öresundsklassrummet project. Using various activities, Öresundsklassrummet inspires children, youths, teachers, head masters, civil servants and politicians to work for a sustainable future.

During the Children's Climate Summit 2014, the Climate Ambassadors have created 5 strategies on how to ensure that the next generations are motivated and capable of taking part in a sustainable future.

The outline of the strategies was first articulated and tested locally in the four cities and then re-developed into this shared proposal in the collaborative working sessions of the first day of the summit.

Enjoy!

CLIMATE CHANGE SHOULD BE INTEGRATED INTO THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

We have no choice whether to go to school or not, so it shouldn't be a choice of caring about climate changes and it shouldn't matter what ability you have or what age you are.

HOW CAN YOU HELP GET CLIMATE CHANGE INTO EVERY CLASS IN THE SCHOOLS?



LET'S START IN OUR OWN CLASSROOMS

We propose to integrate climate change and sustainability into the curriculum of the schools broadly.

We want to start in our own classroom, then spread it to our whole school and finally the local schools in our community. By doing this, we will get experience and we will experiment with these schools until we have found out what can make it successful.

With these experiences as a platform, we will go to the minister of education and show that enforcing climate change into schools can be a success, and that we would like to do it nationally.

SUSTAINABILITY AS SECOND NATURE

Everybody goes through the education system, so we might as well learn how to take care of the climate, because it is very important that we educate this generation and the next to come. We don't really have a choice since climate change will be a factor in our lives no matter what, so it's important that we learn it early. We will have more knowledge, and it will become second nature. And we will become more qualified when entering some of the higher educations.

HOW TO CHANGE A SCHOOL

To really learn about climate changes and how to create a more sustainable future, the integration needs to happen at all levels and in all subjects. This means that the whole school needs to be part of the change. We have developed the following points on how to go about integrating sustainability and climate change into schools.

- A start would be to engage the principals, so that the integration of climate curriculum is supported by leadership.
- At least one teacher at each of the schools should be responsible for teaching climate change.
- It is important that the teacher is someone, who wants to teach students about climate changes. The motivation of the teacher is reflected in the teachings, and will be crucial to how much is learned and how much the students will become motivated to take part in a sustainable future.
- Students should take it seriously, but have fun in the meantime.
- A presentation for all the students when starting the climate curriculum integration would help everyone understand what it's really about.

YOUTH AMBASSADORS

We want to be taken seriously and want to influence the younger generation by becoming youth ambassadors.

**WOULD YOU FIGHT TO GET THE RESOURCES NEEDED TO
EDUCATE YOUTH AMBASSADORS IN YOUR COUNTRY/
CITY?**



LOUD AND CLEAR

We would like to help the younger generation to take action and be heard, as their opinions are different from the adult perspective. In order for us to be taken seriously, we want an official role within the community and clear outlines for our responsibilities.

The role of youth ambassador is important, as we want to show that young people are appreciated and can offer a different and valuable perspective to decision making in society.

We, as young people, want to be equipped with the ability to influence the younger generation, and want weight in our words when it concerns decisions that affect our lives.

DRESSED FOR SUCCESS

The youth ambassadors can offer their voices in both youth-to-youth and youth-to-adult meetings. This can be achieved by allowing the younger generation to give speeches to politicians and have their voices heard. They can give ideas to solutions for real life problems to other youths and children at school visits.

All youth ambassadors must receive an introduction to the role to gain a good understanding of how to be a youth ambassador in practice.

They must be able to speak in a language accessible to young people.

EVERYBODY CAN BE A ROLE MODEL

We need to make grown-ups understand that what they do reflect on the younger people in society today.

WHAT DO YOU DO, TO BE A GOOD ROLE MODEL?



ROLE MODEL = RESPONSIBILITY

A role model is someone who you look up to regardless of age, gender and race. Anybody can be a role model, and it doesn't make a difference who you are, as long as the intentions are right. People can look up to knowledge or simply good behavior, therefore everybody has a responsibility as a potential role model, because your actions might reflect on others.

Being a role model is an important thing because it can help other people who look up to you. It will also help others succeed. Young people listen to the people they care about. Being a role model can accomplish helping others.

THE GAP

As climate change is showing us, there is a gap between how grown-ups act now, and what is sustainable behavior that is good for the younger generations to model after.

Therefore we call for a need to inform people about their position as role models. This includes informing parents, politicians, teachers - all adults.

HOW CAN WE INTEREST YOUTHS TO WANT TO BE INVOLVED IN CREATING ENVIRONMENTAL SOLUTIONS?



MOTIVATION TO ACT

The motivation to act is about how to learn, have fun and get involved.

INVITE US TO PARTICIPATE IN A BRIGHTER FUTURE

In order to empower the youth to take part in a sustainable development, we want the message of climate change to be one of hope instead of one of doom. Also, it requires that children and youths be invited to be part of creating change.

One concrete idea is to create a competition of which youths have to come up with an environmental solution to be able to enter. There should be many competitions to interest larger groups of youths; this will mean that more ideas from youths will be available.

On a larger scale it would be good to create youth organizations; enabling them to participate so that ideas can be created to benefit the environment. Young people want to work together.

PARTICIPATION ON OUR OWN TERMS

To reach young audiences social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and Instagram are the best to use. You can motivate people by creating an APP. This would make it fun to learn and get involved. By making it fun and engaging the sustainable actions will give hope.

By showing youths that you take us seriously, we feel we are part of society. That society is also ours and we are part of it. It would make it important to care for one's city just like one would care for one's house. You wouldn't want your house to be dirty, so keep the city clean as well.

ORGANIC AND LOCAL FOOD

Everyday, all of us need food in order to live. Organic and locally grown foods can have a huge impact in decreasing pollution and CO2 emissions. Public institutions should take the lead.

HOW CAN ORGANIC AND LOCALLY GROWN FOOD BECOME MORE ACCESSIBLE TO MORE PEOPLE? HOW WILL ORGANIC AND LOCALLY GROWN FOOD BE THE PREFERRED CHOICE FOR PEOPLE?



UNEQUAL ACCESS TO SUSTAINABLE FOODS

Since all organic food is very expensive, we should make it cheaper so more people would buy it. Not all people can afford organic food, and we think that it is sad that people who don't have much money are not able to buy it, because it is healthier. Public institutions should use locally grown food to decrease pollution from long, unnecessary transport.

Organic food is healthier to us and better for our earth, because it is not sprayed with chemicals. Producing organic food does not harm anyone and tastes better. More stores should have organic food; and by making non-organic food more expensive more people would buy organic food, making it cheaper in the long run.

There is less transportation involved when eating locally grown food. When you transport less, you decrease pollution and CO2 emissions, which is better for the environment, both locally and globally. It is important, because the environment is affected by unnecessary emissions. There is no need to buy apples from the other side of the planet.

HELPING TO PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE CHOICES

Like organic food is labeled "organic", non-organic food should be labeled "contains pesticides". Additionally, there should be a label on fruit and vegetables with information about what chemicals the food is treated with.

There should be campaigns about why you should buy organic food and not non-organic food, so people can make an informed choice when they purchase food. Too many people do not know how non-organic food is produced.

Public institutions should use locally grown produce of the season. Suppliers to public institutions must follow certain guidelines in relation to where the product comes from and whether it is a seasonal product.

THE MISSING CRITERION

ENGAGING THE NEXT GENERATION **SPEECH**

We cannot call any development ‘sustainable’ if it doesn’t engage the next generation. That is the central message of the following speech, which was delivered at the **OFFICIAL EUROPEAN GREEN CAPITAL HANDOVER CEREMONY** 8 December, during the Green Capital Days, Copenhagen 2014.

Four children representing the city of Malmö, Brussels, Bristol and Copenhagen gave the speech on behalf of the whole group of 55 participants from **THE CHILDREN’S CLIMATE SUMMIT**. All participants contributed to the speech, which was collected and written by speechwriter Rune Kier (www.runekier.dk)

MALMO

We are children from Malmo and right next door we are holding the Children’s Climate Summit. Because we can see that something is missing.

At the United Nations Earth Summit, 12 year old Severn Suzuki walked up on the stage in Rio de Janeiro and made the leaders of the world listen. Last week she turned 35. She is now married and has two kids. A generation has come and gone, but what has changed?

The climate has changed.

- Since Severn Suzuki was born, Earth has not had ONE month below average temperatures – not even ONE
- The ice on Greenland now melts 6 times faster than it did just 10 years ago

When Severn Suzuki spoke a generation ago, climate change was new to many and so was sustainable development. Now we know that climate change will not be something for you to check off and move on to the next item on your to-do list. We can’t allow ourselves to be set back when it comes to the work of the next generation.

The floods have already reached our shores. In India, numerous homes and villages have been

swept away. In Zambia, they are forced to consider floating schools and in Bangladesh school boats are already a harsh reality. In the Pacific, islands are about to disappear entirely and populations will become climate refugees in other countries.

Something is missing: It might be action.

BRUSSELS

We are children from Brussels and we are participating in the Children’s Climate Summit. Because we cannot see how YOU can possible deliver that action WE need.

Climate change will demand our focused attention for the next generation – and the next – and the next.

- The big cities spoke loud and clear when the national governments remained silent,
- But where is the action form the European Union?
- We are the next generation and we will take over when you are gone, but will we be ready?

Will we be able to maintain the work that has already been done? And move towards even further

progress? Do we have what it takes to take climate action to the next level? It is all on the line when we go from this generation to the next.

So much remains to be done – to even keep status quo. So much could be done.

The environmental effects of climate change are here – right now.

- But it CAN be fun to work together across generations
- It CAN be engaging if it is explained in understandable words
- and your generation CAN still act as role models
- Time is running out, but you still have a window of opportunity

Yes, something is missing: It might be the link to the future.

COPENHAGEN

We are children from Copenhagen and across the world we – the children – agree: Something important is missing when selecting the next European Green Capital. That is what we will be discussing at the Children’s Climate Summit.

Why are there no young people on the jury for the European Green Capital Award?

Why are there no formal networks for young people to discuss climate change in Europe’s green capitals?

Engaging the next generation is not even a criterion when deciding the next European Green Capital – and it should be.

- The next generation – our generation – is the one who will suffer the most
- We are the ones who will have to clean up the mess you leave behind
- And we are the ones who should be equipped to take over where you left off

It should not be hard to understand. And it will not be hard to do. In fact, we have done it for you.

- We are ready for jury duty right now
- We have already established a network of young global climate ambassadors

- We have just published a report about how to engage the next generation
- We already did the strategic work and wrote the criterion for you – it is ready to be implemented

Tomorrow at the Children’s Climate Summit we will do an open session in this very building to present our ideas and discuss how best to involve the next generation as part of European Green Capitals. Come along if you can see that something is missing.

Because what is missing – is right in front of you.

BRISTOL

We are children from Bristol and we cannot wait any longer.

Our world is falling apart. You have the means to make it better and you have the means to make us part of the solution. That is what we will be talking about at the Children’s Climate Summit.

Sustainable development is not just about men in suits and ties – it is about involving everybody from all backgrounds, all walks of life and all age groups. We will be the future leaders and we need to be able to change the world for the better. We might not have made the mess we are in – but it is time we turn it around because we are the ones who will be held responsible for the future of this planet.

In 1992 Severn Suzuki spoke in Rio de Janeiro – a generation has passed and the next has taken over, but young people are still not an integral part of our common struggle. You must realize that it is not enough to live up to your obligations, you must enable us – the next generation – to live up to ours.

Indeed, how can we call any development ‘sustainable’ if it does not engage the next generation? Climate change and sustainable development is your task, yes – but it will also be our task – and the task of the next generation and the next, and the next.

Make ‘Engaging the next generation’ a criterion for the European Green Capital now.

Don’t you see? That is what is missing – and it shouldn’t be.



Blooming Motivations – from the exhibition:
Practical examples of education for sustainable
development in the region of Oresund.

GREEN CAPITAL DAYS, DECEMBER 8TH-9TH
COPENHAGEN 2014.

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BRISTOL

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Georgina Salvage · *Participant*
Gill Kelly · *Trip leader*
Mark Curtis · *Teacher*
Elliot Lamb · *Teacher*

BRUSSELS

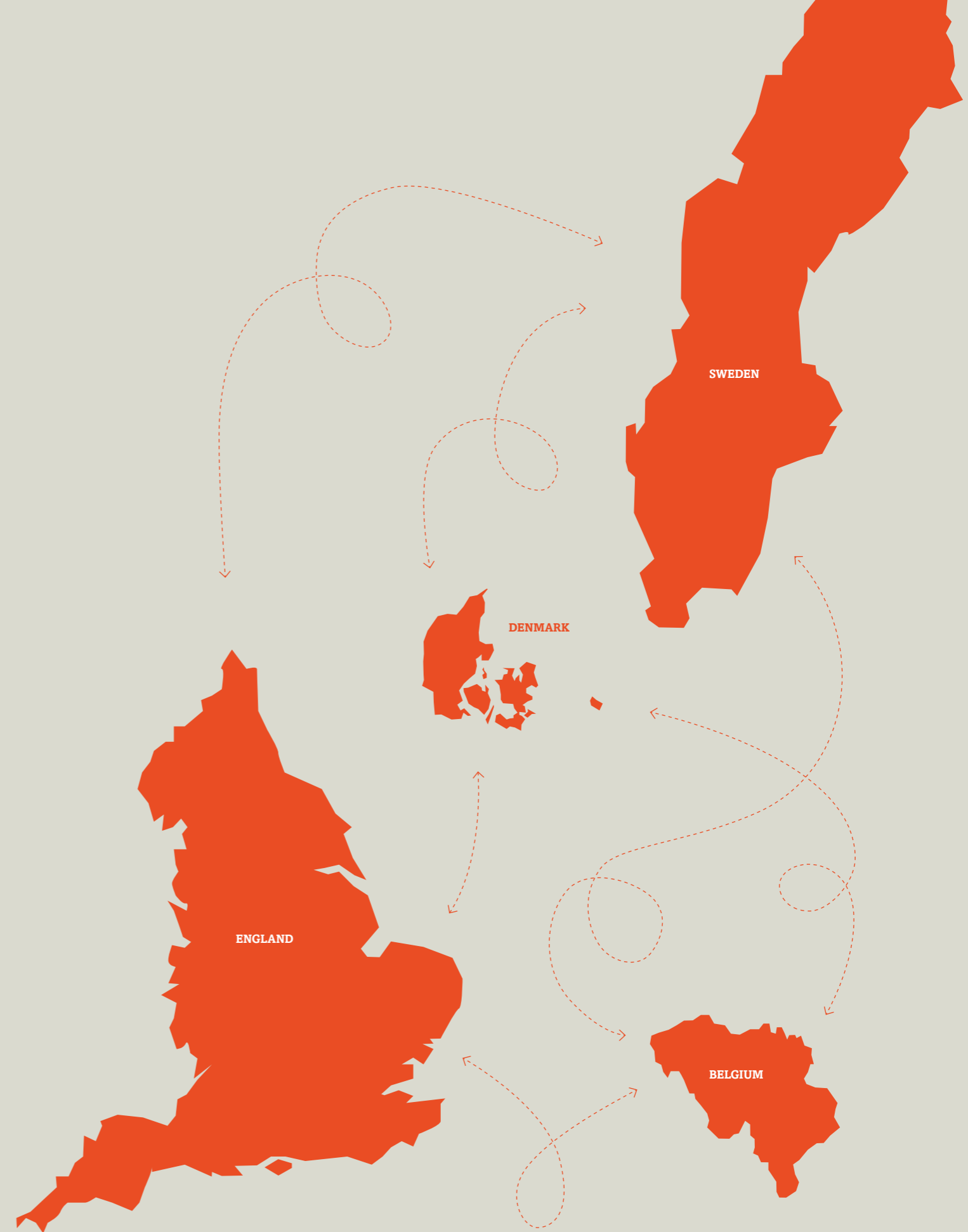
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How can we call any development
'sustainable' if it does not engage
the next generation?

THE CHILDREN'S CLIMATE SUMMIT
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